

Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority

Business Meeting 1:30 P.M.

Oakville Community Hall
107 E. Oak St.
Oakville, WA

June 21, 2012 - Meeting Notes

Board Members Present: Merlin MacReynold, City of Chehalis; Ron Averill, Lewis County Commissioner; Jim Cook, City of Aberdeen; Terry Willis, Grays Harbor County Commissioner; Karen Valenzuela, Thurston County Commissioner; Edna Fund, City of Centralia; Dolores Lee, Town of Pe Ell; Dan Thompson, City of Oakville; Mark Swartout, Town of Bucoda

Board Members Excused: Vickie Raines, City of Cosmopolis; Ken Estes, City of Aberdeen; ~~Montesano~~; Lionel Pinn, City of Napavine

Others Present: Please see sign in sheets

Handouts/Materials Used:

- Agenda
- Meeting Notes from May 17, 2012
- Work Plan 2012-2013
- ESB 5127 Jobs Now Projects
- Expenditure Reports

1. Call to Order/Introductions

Vice Chair Valenzuela called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m. Self-introductions were made.

Vice Chair Valenzuela stated today would be Lara's last day with the Flood Authority. She will be moving to Pennsylvania where her husband has taken a position with Penn State. Vice Chair Valenzuela presented Ms. Fowler with a "Certificate of Admiration" award for her outstanding work and contribution. Ms. Fund presented Ms. Fowler with a card from the Board containing various gift cards.

Ms. Fowler stated that she appreciated having people share their stories and what was important to them. She stated if we know what the issues are then we know what steps to take. She liked going on the various tours because everyone learned a lot, but she especially liked sitting down with a cup of coffee and communicating. She stated she believes the Flood Authority will find a solution.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Ms. Fowler stated she had left out the State Team Report and it should be listed as item 5 (d).

Commissioner Willis asked if action was needed on the Early Warning System. That was added to 6 (b). The agenda was approved with the additions.

3. Approval of the Meeting Notes from May 17, 2012

Commissioner Willis asked that the word "approximately" be added to the number of projects, found on page 5 of the business meeting notes. The meeting notes were approved with the change.

4. Public Comment

Mr. Dave Muller stated that if the basin wide plan included retention as an element of the plan to protect I-5 the permitting would be facilitated in 7 to 10 years, not 14 years like the last dam. He also thought it was wise to start at the lower river and move up, but the message from the governor is to protect I-5. He hoped that protection of I-5 would be looked at concurrently with lower river projects because it cannot take several years to get to I-5.

Mr. Al Smith, Aberdeen resident, agreed with the emphasis on the lower river with equal focus on I-5. He reminded the board that the Flood Authority was approached several months ago about the passage of emergency vehicles [on Wishkah Rd].

Mr. Frank Kersch, Aberdeen resident, stated he is worried about Wishkah Rd. There are problems in the lower basin with tidal waters. The model will take in some tidal effects and he volunteered his services for river watch. He thought that might help out with Mr. Karpack's modeling.

Mr. Gordon stated he appreciated the tours. Harris Creek is ready to go but if there is no modeling on Harris Creek it is not being done right; the impact downstream is unknown. By adding additional passage it will put more water downstream. If the modeling is done ahead that would be better.

Mr. Karl Goeres stated he is concerned about the impact downstream by what gets done upstream. What happens upstream affects everything that is downstream in the future.

5. Reports

a. Chair's report
None

b. Correspondence
Ms. Fowler stated a comment was received on the fisheries study and it could be forwarded.

c. Member Reports/Updates
Centralia – Ms. Fund reported that there was a ground breaking for Centralia's community garden last week.

Grays Harbor County – Commissioner Willis stated the public outreach meetings were well attended and there were many good comments. Those will be incorporated with the Flood Authority activities.

Lewis County – Commissioner Averill stated there was a ribbon cutting on the Mellen St. project, which involves widening the freeway from Maytown to Mellen St. It will be a three year project and when it is completed there will be uninterrupted access to the hospital regardless of flooding.

d. State Team Report

Mr. Butch Ogden stated the Chehalis River Basin Inventory and Evaluation study was completed, along with the abstract studies. This is a project the Conservation District has been working on since last September. The final report is in an electronic format and can be reproduced. Mr. Ogden has meeting notes from meetings around the community and will make sure they are available electronically also. Mr. Ogden stated there was a gap analysis done on areas that have not been studied. It was discovered that there was no geomorphology study done. Mr. Ogden stated this type of study would be very expensive and he did not know what could be gained by doing one.

Ms. Fowler stated these studies can be added to the iPRMT site. Ms. Fund stated electronic copies had been given to Timberland Regional Libraries.

6. State Updates

a. Resolution for Governor Gregoire

Ms. Fowler stated Governor Gregoire had received the resolution from Mr. Phillips and she is still trying to find time to come to a Flood Authority meeting. Basin flooding is a top priority for her and will continue to be as long as she is governor. She was pleased to get the recognition.

b. Early Warning System/Possible Action

Commissioner Averill stated it is apparent that the smaller towns will have a difficult time paying a share of the O&M for the gages. The Flood Authority needs to give more study time as to how this expense might be equitably distributed and whether some other source might pick it up. Vice Chair Valenzuela agreed. The choices now are to keep going down the same path or paying for it out of another fund knowing it will eventually become a state responsibility, which will be discussed with the governor.

Ms. Lee agreed. Mr. Swartout also agreed and stated there are many gages, some used by the National Weather Service (NWS). Lewis County pays for some of those gages and he asked if those are used by the NWS or the Early Warning System. There are a sub-set of gages that need to be incorporated into the system that had funding sources already. Find out who is using them and who is maintaining them. That would make it easier to understand what gages the Flood Authority needs to have funded and what part of the system they belong to. Commissioner Averill stated WEST should know what is going into the project. These gages are considered operation and maintenance, not capital budget.

Vice Chair Valenzuela stated that would be on the list of items to bring up with OFM on Monday.

7. Discussion/Action on Work Plan

Ms. Fowler stated she would follow up with the Executive Committee to add the new items and get them to OFM as a deliverable.

Commissioner Averill stated the FY 2013/2015 budget needs to be approved during the next legislature; it needs to re-authorize projects or add money for additional projects. Also, we need to determine how we will work with OFM for distribution of funding, whether it is through Lewis County or some other source.

Vice Chair Valenzuela stated the Flood Authority needs to figure out where it is with projects to see if it has to be added to, and also think about 2013-2015 projects.

Ms. Fund asked about a meeting in August. The Flood Authority needs to make the Jobs Now Act happen, and that may require an August meeting. Vice Chair Valenzuela stated we should assume there will be an August meeting unless we decide in July that we do not need to meet.

8. Discussion/Action for Potential Contracts

Ms. Fowler handed out a staffing memo and budget information. On the budget information sheet the expected remaining funds on July 1, 2012 will be approximately \$275,000. The second side shows possible ways for allocating that money for the tasks, leaving \$164,988 for potential staffing.

The major staffing roles are for facilitation, staffing and administration. After the last meeting, the direction was to break up Ms. Fowler's role into three pieces which is what this paper reflects.

Mr. Kramer stated there were two elements that were discussed at Ruckelshaus: facilitation and supporting Mr. Phillips' proposal for continuing support to leaders in the Basin to develop a recommended set of priority projects. They are two separate items and Mr. Philips offered to pay for the second. When Ruckelshaus is paid, overhead and the director are being paid so the number Mr. Kramer estimated for Flood Authority facilitation was \$135,000, assuming the Authority meets once a month. That consumes most of the \$160,000. It is not workable to have the Center to provide facilitation and staff. Alternatives include finding another facilitator that is cheaper, have the state pay for it, or don't meet as frequently.

Commissioner Averill stated another option is to not have full-day meetings; reduce the length and the number of meetings.

Ms. Fowler explained how she distributed the funds.

Commissioner Averill stated there is nothing that provides time working with the legislature. He asked if that would be in Phase II. Mr. Kramer stated Phase II would include some briefings to the legislators but would not cover a lot of work.

Mr. Swartout stated it does not include a liaison between the Flood Authority and the legislators. Ms. Fowler stated in the more detailed tasks the Flood Authority can have an education role but not a lobbying role. It is not identified under staff but under Education and Outreach.

Mr. MacReynold stated it is hard to know how to make a decision for Chehalis because part of the success of the Flood Authority has been through the work of Ms. Fowler. Who will be her replacement? Without knowing that Chehalis does not know if it can support moving forward on the staffing time. He also thought it would be tough to reduce the committee meetings. There are a lot of time sensitive issues where real expectations have to be met. How do you do that and reduce the Flood Authority meetings? Someone with management experience and knowing how the committees work needs to spend time putting a proposal together. Some decisions are being kicked out. At some point we won't be able to do that and hope someone else will provide funding.

Vice Chair Valenzuela asked Mr. Hueckel to speak to the proposal of SBGH working with the Flood Authority.

Mr. Hueckel stated what has been laid out in the work plan is for SBGH to assume part of Ms. Fowler's job. It would be heavier on Mr. Boettcher's role for administrative support. He would take on the role that Ms. Fowler has had with the Executive Committee. That will be a big addition to what SBGH has done in the past: helping put meetings together, field tours, Flood Authority support and basically keeping things moving. The Project Committee has a huge task to implement those projects which would fall under Mr. Hueckel, as well as state agencies, the Tribe and permitting.

Mr. Hueckel continued by stating that the Flood Authority has discussed the 2013-2015 budget due to OFM in October and that needs to be done in a couple of months. SBGH would help envision the Flood Authority building out from 2013. You can do small projects every two years; if you want to project further that will determine how to tackle larger projects.

Mr. MacReynold, speaking for Chehalis, did not believe that SBGH could pull all that together. Commissioner Averill stated the Flood Authority is not run by a centralized operation where someone has control. When the Authority hired the previous facilitator it was to work with the legislature. Part of that was leading up to where we are now. The budget, which used to be done every other year, has turned out to be yearly because of supplemental requests. There are a number of pots of money and it takes someone working with capital staff and the money that is out there. The next session will have new staff and what happens to what has been promised so far? We need protection. We were underfunded when we started out this year and the money is not here. We need additional money to get through the year – can we talk to the governor's office about identifying those pots?

Ms. Fund stated that the Chair and Vice Chair took on the role of legislation. Vice Chair Valenzuela stated she and Chairman Raines could not have done that without Ms. Fowler's help. Mr. MacReynold is saying we are not hitting that mark yet and Commissioner Averill is saying we need to identify the \$46 million that is undesignated in the budget. (Commissioner Willis stated that is down to \$40 million now).

Ms. Fowler stated over the next few months it will be important to know what you need funding for: hydraulic modeling, implementing the Early Warning System, so much for staffing. Now you have to allocate time. Be mindful of what you are asking staff to do. You need to deal with the major work items (listed in the staffing memo) and make recommendations to the Executive Committee (assignments/tasks in staffing memo).

Mr. Kramer stated he would continue to work with leaders of the local communities and the state agencies and tribes to see if a combination of projects could become something that could be supported. The money for him represents about 40 hours a month if the Authority meets once a month. Ms. Fowler's time is about 76 hours a month.

It was noted that some roles and times are overlapping. Mr. Kramer stated it would be more expensive adding Ruckelshaus to it.

Mr. Boettcher stated SBGH looked at the work load and the project sub committees. He used 40 hours per month but there will be a lot of bird dogging on items coming up next year. Looking at what is contemplated, 85 hours comes to \$112,000.

Vice Chair Valenzuela stated there have been no conclusions but the Executive Committee is to get clarity from the meeting on Monday and get back in writing some things to sort out.

Commissioner Averill stated some time needs to be figured in with Cindy Zender or someone similar for legislative liaison.

Mr. Kramer stated that regarding the roads and bridges, he talked to WSDOT about supporting analysis on bridges. As for the Ruckelshaus report, the estimate on S. Elma, etc., he can get help with some of that work – the Authority may not need that \$10,000. Also, the proposal to the governor's office for staffing included Mr. Karpack doing additional modeling which is another moving piece. He has advocated time for Mr. Karpack.

Ms. Fowler stated the Executive Committee will put something together as soon after the meeting on Monday as possible. The contracts are up in June but perhaps the time can be extended to keep getting work done, with no additional budget. Money for Lewis County is built into the budget and there is a means to sort out the budget with OFM.

9. Discussion on Jobs Now Projects

Mr. Hueckel explained that all of the projects came from the matrix. Some did not have enough information for them to be moved forward.

The City of Chehalis Airport Levee is a \$1.24 million project that was highlighted in the legislation. The airport is owned by Chehalis and Lewis County. Mr. MacReynold stated this project would not raise the levee. To do that would not have a significant impact downstream but it would impact the north. We propose widening the base inside the levee for a future raising after knowing what the impacts will be. Construction would most likely be next spring or summer.

Mr. Hueckel stated environmental permits would not be required so the process could be streamlined.

The Adna Levee is actually a rails to trails owned by the State Parks Department. Commissioner Averill stated this was originally a railroad berm and is now a trail. The railroad maintained the berm while it was being used as a railroad, including the culverts. When the parks department stopped maintaining it, it caused the flooding in Adna. The suggestion is to restore the berm to its original condition to do what it is supposed to do. This project is \$244,000. The problem is maintaining it – funding for the State Parks has been cut.

The Bucoda levee needs design work.

Wishkah project – this information was covered at the morning session.

Mr. Cook will have the details on several projects and will send them to Mr. Hueckel. These projects include the trails and dike behind Burger King, the bank of the Wishkah north of the highway, the Market St. Dike and work for the south side dike certification.

Vice Chair Valenzuela stated the meeting on Monday would focus on streamlining a process for living up to the capital budget and how to get agreement and approval from the Flood Authority and the Tribe. She asked Mr. Hueckel to have either the Project Committee or the Flood Authority convene a review team to determine which projects make the final list. There are already projects that exceed the \$5 million. There will be as much detail as possible furnished on these projects so a good decision can be made.

Ms. Fowler asked if funding for critter pads should be from OFM to the project proponent. Commissioner Averill made a motion to take \$500,000 that is designated for critter pads and recommend to the governor's office to direct the money to the Conservation Commission and work with that group. There was a thumbs' up on that motion.

Commissioner Willis stated there are 138 projects still on the matrix.

Mr. Hueckel stated the improvements to the Satsop River are on the list and there is information associated with that project.

10. Expenditure Review

Commissioner Averill stated Task 5 shows \$10,000 included in the encumbered funds and needs to be moved to the additional encumbered funds column because that \$10,000 is going to Ms. Fowler. The rest of the spreadsheet is self-explanatory, a continuation of the report that has been given. Included in the packet are invoices from WSE, SBGH Partners and Gordon Thomas Honeywell.

11. Confirm Next Meeting

The meeting in July will be in Pe Ell. Ms. Lee stated she would get in touch with Weyerhaeuser so the Authority can tour the proposed retention dam site. Topics for the next meeting include: a final work plan, staffing, OFM recommendations, and the OFM draft report.

12. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:34 p.m.